Marking Period 1

Journal #1: The Good Earth by Pearl S. Buck

Summary: The part of the story that I am at consists of the main character Wang Lung and his journey with his new found family. The story takes place in China, and depicts the story of Wang Lung, a humble farmer and the challenges he faces. At the beginning of the novel, Wang was "purchasing" his wife (who is not given a name) from the local slave house. On their first night together Wang invited over some of his closest male relatives and friends to feast for the good news of his marriage. The woman would not show herself to other men and instead stayed in the kitchen to cook for the guests. The book seemed to skip time and in the next section the woman was bearing a child and had her first born son. Wang Lung and his father were extremely pleased and excited about the new baby.

Analysis: I think that this part of the book is very strange. I do not like the idea of arranged marriages, even though this was more of Wang's selection. Additionally, the fact that there is not love or feeling within the relationship makes it unbelievable that they are with child and now are considered parents. There is very little communication between them and to me the whole situation is not correct. However, this is how China did (does?) their marriages and relationships.

Application: This applies to our essential questions because it is telling the story of other countries and how the people interact with one another and the environment. What I am getting out of this story is that women are not viewed as equals for the fact that the wife is known as "the woman" in the novel. The woman is expected to do the cleaning, cooking, and help in the fields. She bore her child alone with no help from another woman or Wang for she locked herself in the bedroom for hours until it was complete. Additionally, it is obvious that family is very important for generations live within one household. The widowed father lives with his son and his wife, and now they have a child so there will be 3 generations within the household. They respect the elderly man and assist him on his daily tasks like bathing and eating. Finally, the man of the house has the role of working in the fields. Wang is the only one in the household that can efficiently work, so he is the one that is constantly in the fields. However, at the beginning of the book Wang went to the market to get food for when his wife came so I am unsure if that is his role or if his wife will take that role along with child care. Overall, I am unsure if these characteristics span time because I do not know if China is still like this, but I am positive that it does not span culture because America is not like this anymore.